



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Economic Development

MA Downtown Initiative Guidance Webinar

Community One Stop for Growth



Road Map



1. Program Overview
2. Where does the Program Fit in the One Stop?
3. Application Instructions
4. Important Program Parameters
5. How to Be Competitive
6. Examples of Successful Applications
7. Key Dates and Opportunities to Get Guidance



MA Downtown Initiative Overview

Description: What is the purpose of the program?

The primary mission of the MDI is to make downtown revitalization an integral part of community development in cities and towns across the Commonwealth. MDI's guiding principles are that the most effective approach to downtown revitalization is a holistic one; that it addresses economic and community development needs; and that it provides a framework of interrelated activities that promote positive change in a downtown to keep it healthy and prosperous.

Eligibility: What types of organizations can receive funding

MDI funds are applied for by the municipality. The technical assistance provided should be implemented with both the public and private involved.

The MA Downtown Initiative is administered through the **Community One Stop for Growth** - a single application portal and collaborative review process designed to streamline the experience for the applicant and better coordinate economic development programs and staff on engagement and grant making.





Categories of Technical Assistance

- Downtown Design Consultant Services
- Downtown Mobility/Parking Consultant Services
- Downtown Wayfinding/Branding Consultant Services
- Creating an Equitable Downtown
- Economics of Downtown Consultant Services
- Pedestrian Orientation/Placemaking Consultant Services
- Small Business Support/E-commerce Consultant Services
- Forming a Downtown Management District: Feasibility
- Forming a Downtown Management District: Implementation



Where Does MDI Fit in the One Stop?

Preparing for Growth

Community Activation & Placemaking

Technical Assistance for Downtowns

- Downtown Design Consultant Services
- Downtown Mobility/Parking Consultant Services
- Downtown Wayfinding/Branding Consultant Services
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Incentivize Business in Vacant Downtown Storefronts

- Access Tax Credits for Business to Occupy Vacant Storefronts

Planning & Zoning

Community Plan

- Master Plan
- Neighborhood/Downtown/Corridor Plan
- Urban Renewal Plan
- Housing Production Plan
- Housing Plan Alignment with State Housing Plan/Regional Goals
- Regional Plan
- Other Community Plan

Zoning Revision

- Zoning Revision to Comply with Section 3A of MGL c.40A
- Zoning Revision related to Accessory Dwelling Unit to comply with revisions to MGL c40A section 3
- Zoning Revision to adopt pro-housing revisions that qualify for simple majority voting threshold
- Comprehensive Zoning Review & Revision
- Other Zoning Revision

Planning for Housing

- Housing Feasibility Plan
- Housing Site Master Plan
- Housing Infrastructure Plan
- Housing Site Design Plan

District Redevelopment Technical Assistance

- Planning for Growth in a Commercial/Industrial District

Site Preparation

Site Improvements to Unlock Development

- Site Readiness Pre-Construction
- Site Readiness Construction

Municipal Surplus Property Disposition

- Municipal Surplus Property

Brownfield Site Clean Up

- Brownfields Site Assessment
- Brownfields Remediation
- Disposition Study

Catalyzing Specific Projects

Building

Underutilized Property Rehabilitation

- Underutilized Property Pre-Construction
- Underutilized Property Construction

Housing Production

- Support Housing Production
- Support Housing Rehabilitation
- Support Housing Preservation

Revitalize Commercial Space in a TDI District

- Activation of Underperforming Commercial Space

Infrastructure

Infrastructure to Support Residential Growth

- Pre-construction - Design / Engineering Documents Only
- Construction

Public Infrastructure to Support Mixed-Use Development

- Pre-construction - Design / Engineering Documents Only
- Construction

Public Infrastructure to Support Commercial/Industrial Development

- Pre-construction - Design / Engineering Documents Only
- Construction

Small Town Road Improvements to Enhance Public Safety (STRAP)

- Construction of Road Improvements to Enhance Public Safety



Application Instructions

In Section 2 of the Full Application, applicants are asked to indicate the Project Category. To be reviewed by MA Downtown Initiative applicants should make the following selections in question 2.4:

Development Continuum Category:

Community Activation & Placemaking

Project Type:

Technical Assistance for Downtowns

Project Focus:

Downtown Design Consultant Services
Downtown Mobility/Parking Consultant Services
Downtown Wayfinding/Branding Consultant Services
Economics of Downtown Consultant Services
Pedestrian Orientation/Placemaking Consultant Services
Small Business Support/E-commerce Consultant Services
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For more information on completing the Full Application, visit www.mass.gov/onestop to view *One Stop Webinar 2: Application Guidance*



Important Project Parameters

Project Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none">There is not a match requirement. The total amount for consultant services is \$30,000. The consultant is assigned and paid by the MDI program. There is no RFP process.
Project Timeline Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The technical assistance must be completed by June 30, 2026.
Eligible Use of Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The program provides funding for technical assistance in design, mobility/parking, wayfinding/branding, equity, small business assistance, economics of downtown or creation of a district management entity. A grantee community can expect its consultant to develop a specific scope of services that may include research, analysis, preliminary design ideas, and a strategic outline of next steps.
Ineligible Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Only one project per municipality will be reviewed under MA Downtown Initiative Technical Assistance Program.The grant does not pay for staff salaries, software, or physical improvements.



How To Be Competitive

What is the key information that program reviewers take into consideration?

- Achievable Project Scope
- Ability to Execute and Leadership – public and private sector representation
- Achievable Timeline
- Outcomes and Impact
- Progress to Date, Showing Commitment
- Responsiveness to support of Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles

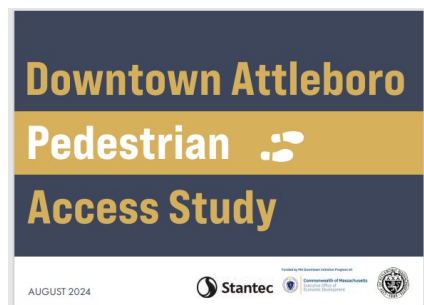
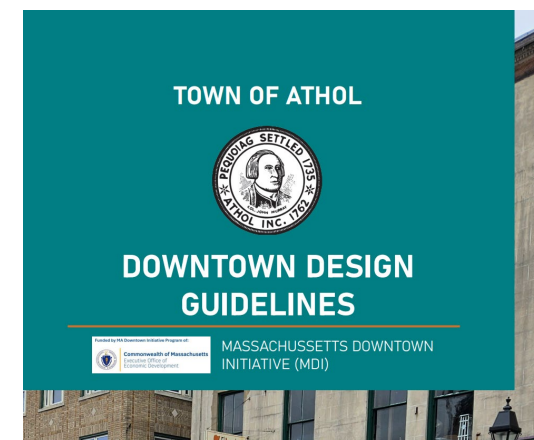
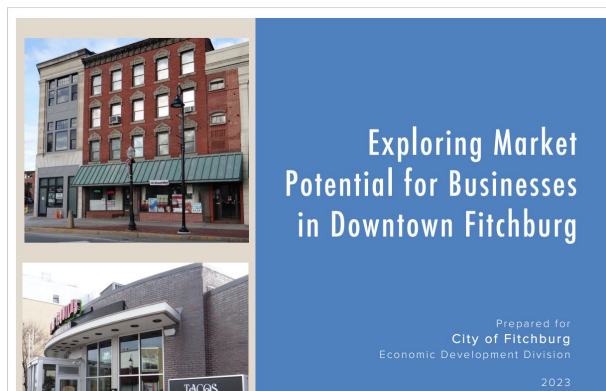
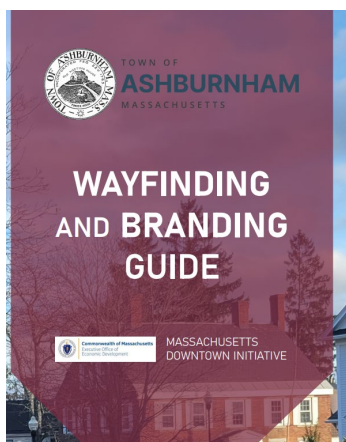
What attachments should applicants be prepared to include in their applications?

- Map of Area
- Pictures if useful



Successful Applications

The MDI website, mass.gov/mdi has final reports for the past 3 years. They are a great reference to view past technical assistance topics and the level of assistance that is provided.



FY26 Round Timeline



Jan.

- **Full Application and Expression of Interest Open (January)** – The Full Application is the official form for submitting all funding requests. Applicants may now begin to work on applications in the IGX system, however applications will only be accepted during the submission period.
- **One Stop Guidance Phase (January – April)** – A series of webinars will be hosted by both the One Stop Team and staff from each program within the One Stop. In addition, office hours will be hosted to answer applicant questions. Visit www.mass.gov/onestop for the full schedule of webinars and office hours.
- **Full Application Submission Period (May-June)** – Applicants may submit their Full Application(s) beginning May 5, 2025. All applications must be submitted by the **Full Application deadline of 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, June 4.**
- **Review and Evaluation (July – September)** – All complete and eligible Full Applications submitted by the deadline will be reviewed and evaluated by the corresponding program managers at each state agency. The One Stop team will also conduct joint application reviews across agencies. Based on the program's criteria, each program will prepare its list of applications recommended for funding, to be further reviewed and approved by agency and Secretariat leadership.
- **Notification of Grant Decisions (October)** – Once final recommendations have been approved, applicants will be notified of grant decisions in writing, and announcement events will be scheduled.

Oct.



Opportunities for Guidance

Visit www.mass.gov/onestop for more information on:

- **Expression of Interest**
 - Complete an Expression of Interest form to see if your project(s) is eligible for funding through the One Stop and get tips for preparing your application
- **One Stop and Program Webinars**
 - Recordings of all One Stop webinars are now available on the One Stop website
- **Office Hours**
 - **One Stop General Guidance Office Hours** – One Stop staff will hold office hours to discuss general One Stop process and technology questions
 - **Program Office Hours** – Staff from each program will hold an office hour to answer applicant questions related to the program
 - **MA Downtown Initiative's office hours will be held on April 7, 2025 at 12:00 pm**
 - **Contact staff- Emmy Hahn, emmy.hahn@mass.gov to discuss your project idea**